

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

USLO PEKING PRIORITY

CINCPAC HONOLULU, HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 9122

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRN, JA, TW, CH

SUBJ: JAPAN AND TAIWAN AGREE TO RESTORE AIR LINK

REF: TAIPEI 4057

SUMMARY. IN SURPRISE DEVELOPMENT, JAPAN AND TAIWAN HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT THROUGH HIGHLY SECRET TALKS TO RESTORE THE AIR LINE BROKEN LAST YEAR. AGREEMENT WILL BE SIGNED IN TAIPEI JULY 9 BUT MANY DETAILS ARE YET TO BE WORKED OUT. END SUMMARY.

1. JAPAN AND TAIWNN HAVE AGREED TO RESTORE THE AIR LINK SEVERED FIFTEEN MONTHS AGO WHEN TOKYO SIGNED CIVIL AVIATION AGREEMENT WITH PEKING WHICH "OFFENDED TAIWAN'S DIGNITY." FONOFF CHINA DIV DIRECTOR FUJITA CONFIRMED JULY 8 MEDIA LEAK TO US, EXPLAINING THAT TAIWAN HAD ACCEPTED THE END OF LAST WEEK A SLIGHTLY MODIFIED VERSION OF PROPOSAL MADE BY JAPAN'S INTERCHANGE ASSOCIATION IN GREAT SECRECY IN MARCH WHICH MOST JAPANESE ASSUMED WAS DEAD. BECAUSE OF PUBLICITY GIVEN SURPRISE DEVELOPMENT, TAIZO HORIKOSHI, PRESIDENT
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OF JAPAN'S EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION AND FORMER AMB ITAGAKI, MANAGING

DIRECTOR OF ASSN, ARE FLYING TODAY (JULY 8) TO TAIPEI TO SIGN THE PRIVATE AGREEMENT JULY 9 WITH CHANG YEN-TIEN, HEAD OF EAST ASIA RELATIONS ASSN AND HORIKOSHI'S COUNTERPART.

2. VICE FONMIN TOGO EXPLAINED TO THE AMBASSADOR JULY 8 THAT DESPITE GREAT DEAL OF TALK (AND EFFORTS BY LDP DIETMEN), THERE HAD BEEN NO APPARENT PROGRESS UNTIL KMT SECRETARY GENERAL CHANG PAO-SHU VISITED TOKYO FOR FORMER PRIMIN SATO'S FUNERAL JUNE 16. TOGO SAID THAT A STATEMENT MADE BY FONMIN MIYAZAWA DURING DIET INTERPELLATIONS REPLY JUNE 10 HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY TAIWAN AS AN ACCEPTABLE RESTATEMENT OF OHIRA'S OFFENSIVE REMARKS. IN FACT, TOGO POINTED OUT, MIYAZAWA'S STATEMENT ON JAPAN'S POSITION WAS NOT MUCH DIFFERENT, THOUGH MORE POSITIVE ON ATTITUDE OF OTHER COUNTRIES TOWARD TAIWAN. MIYAZAWA REPLIED TO LDP MEMBER HATANO AS FOLLOWS. "AS FOR ITS STAND, OUR COUNTRY DOES NOT THINK THAT (THE SUN-IN-BLUE-SKY FLAG) IS A NATIONAL FLAG. HOWEVER, FOR THE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE RECOGNIZED TAIWAN AS A STATE, TAIWAN IS A STATE. OBJECTIVELY, IT IS TRUE THAT (THE SUN-IN-BLUE-SKY FLAG) IS RECOGNIZED AS A NATIONAL FLAG. FOR ITS PART, TOGO SAID TAIWAN WILL CONFORM WITH OHIRA'S ORIGINAL "SIX POINTS" DETAILING SPECIFIC MEANS TO IMPLEMENT AGREEMENT. TOGO SAID HE WAS UNSURE HOW PEKING WOULD REACT, BUT TOKYO WOULD PROCEED ANYWAY.

3. BOTH TOGO AND FUJITA POINTED OUT THAT NUMEROUS DETAILS OF EVENTUAL ARRANGEMENTS REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT EVEN AFTER THE AGREEMENT IS SIGNED. ALTHOUGH TAIPEI'S PLANES COULD FLY TO JAPAN WITHIN MONTH OR TWO, TOGO SAID IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT AIRLINE WILL REPRESENT JAPAN. JAL CANNOT BECAUSE IT FLIES TO PRC, BUT SINCE JAL IS ONLY AUTHENTIC INTERNATIONAL JAPANESE AIRLINE, JAPANESE ONWARD RIGHTS BEYOND TAIWAN (TO HONG KONG, BANGKOK AND SINGAPORE) POSE PROBLEMS YET TO BE RESOLVED. SIMILARLY, TAIPEI'S PLANES WILL LAND AT HANEDA AIRPORT BUT JAPAN MUST ARRANGE SO THAT CAL AND CAAC FLIGHTS DO NOT LAND AT SAME TIME OR PARK ADJACENTLY. THE BAN ON JAPAN'S PLANES FLYING THROUGH TAIWAN'S ADIZ WILL BE LIFTED.

4. COMMENT. TALKS KNOWN ONLY TO VERY FEW PERSONS WERE CARRIED OUT WITH UTMOST SECRECY AT HIGH LEVEL. BUREAUCRACY WAS VIRTUALLY EXCLUDED. FUJITA CONFIRMED AS MUCH WHEN CHIDED FOR THIS "FUJITA CONFIDENTIAL

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SHOCK," SINCE HE INSISTED HE WAS BROUGHT IN ONLY AT LAST MINUTE.

5. CHOICE OF TIMING WAS GROC'S. WITHOUT BEING IN POSITION TO ANALYZE TAIPEI'S MOTIVES, WE WOULD LIST THE FOLLOWING GENERAL FACTORS AS IMPORTANT IN SETTING SCENE FOR DECISION:

A. PERSONALITIES HAVE CHANGED IN JAPAN. OHIRA IS NO LONGER FOREIGN MINISTER. FROM MOMENT HE TOOK OFFICE MIYAZAWA

EXPRESSED DESIRE TO RESTORE AIR LINK AND HAS APPARENTLY WORKED HARD TO DO SO.

B. A DECENT INTERVAL OF TIME HAS PASSED.

C. TALKS ON PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY HAVE STALLED, GIVING IMPRESSION PERHAPS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR TAIPEI.

6. JAPAN, FOR ITS PART, NEVER EXPECTED AIR LINK TO BE CUT IN FIRST PLACE, AND IN ITS EMBARRASSMENT HAS HAD RESTORATION OF FLIGHT AS HIGH PRIORITY ITEM EVER SINCE. STRONG PRESSURE FROM LDP RIGHT-WING AND A SENSE THAT RELATIONS WITH PEKING ARE ON A SOUND IF SLOW FORGING MAY HAVE PROMPTED MIKI TO TAKE ADVANTAGE

OF WHAT MUST HAVE SEEMED A FRAGILE OPPORTUNITY.
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